



RTCA in New Jersey

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. The National Park Service (NPS) staff provide technical assistance to community groups, city, county, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations working to enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation opportunities. We help local leaders plan and design trails and parks; conserve and improve access to natural areas; protect special places; and create recreation opportunities.

The RTCA program in New Jersey offers a wide range of services that can be tailored to meet the needs of an individual project. The NPS staff members are trained facilitators who encourage project leaders to build collaborative partnerships among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. The program helps communities and groups define their vision, goals, and objectives; analyze issues and opportunities; and develop strategic action plans and time lines for projects. We do not provide financial assistance, but can help project partners identify and secure sources of funding and technical support.

Any community with committed project partners can apply for assistance. Believing the best plans are completed locally, the National Park Service will work with partners to encourage broad-based community participation in planning, designing, and implementing the projects we support.

In 2016, the National Park Service in New Jersey will work on a variety of projects including:

- **Groundwork: Elizabeth** – The project goal is to bring about the sustained regeneration and management of the environment by developing community-based partnerships empowering people, businesses, and educational institutions to promote environmental, economic and social well-being. (Location: Elizabeth, New Jersey)
- **Lower Delaware River Canoemobile** – The project goal is to bring together environmental organizations, government agencies, school districts, and other partners to implement an urban water-based environmental education experience for thousands of youth and residents along the Lower Delaware River and its tributaries. (Location: Camden, New Jersey)
- **Phillipsburg Riverfront Heritage Trail** – The project goal is to create water trail opportunities on the Finger Lakes and linking waterways. (Location: Northwest New Jersey)
- **Waterfront South Trail Connections** – The project goal is to enhance local parkland and waterfront accessibility to the Waterfront South neighborhood of Camden, New Jersey by developing a trail system that connects the park spaces to the local communities and with a larger network of trails. (Location: Camden, New Jersey)



Students explore their local waterways through the Canoemobile program at Pyne Poynt Park in Camden, NJ.

Recent Success Story

Camden Green Ambassadors Program – In July 2015, the National Park Service partnered with Independence National Historical Park to host nine high school interns from Camden, New Jersey for an inspiring day about leadership and social movements. The interns were part of the Camden Green Ambassadors program, which exposes high school students to a variety of environmental careers through hands-on experiences at various host sites. The Green Ambassadors engaged in an interactive park tour that highlighted the pivotal movements--and the individuals who were commemorated. The students then created short videos about causes they felt passionately about. Among the chosen causes were violence in

Camden, animal rights, and women's rights. The activity allowed the interns to creatively express their thoughts, and consider what causes they were willing to fight for in their communities. The day ended with a challenging discussion about race relations, environmental justice, and various forms of discrimination.

For more information about the RTCA program refer to: www.nps.gov/rtca, or for information about ongoing or potential RTCA projects in New Jersey contact:

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